



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

Meeting Date: October 22, 2020

Agenda Item: Mattson Property FAS (Montebello FAS Acquisition) R1

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 minutes

Background: On December 5th, 2019 the commission endorsed the acquisition of 14.89 acres adjacent to Flathead Lake near Dayton to be developed and operated as a Fishing Access Site. Site developments would include access roads, a parking area, a concrete boat ramp, boat dock, vault latrine, on-site host site, signage and boundary fencing. The site would be open for day-use only. This proposal would increase public access on Flathead Lake for boating, fishing and shore-based recreation. The property is uniquely situated near Wild Horse Island State Park, which would make it a prime launch point for trips to the island. A discounted sale has been negotiated with the previous landowner, and the Montana Outdoor Legacy Foundation who currently owns and is holding the property until FWP secures funding to finalize the purchase. The department is now seeking the commission's approval to finalize this acquisition.

Public Involvement Process & Results: FWP released a draft environmental assessment for a 30-day public review period on July 10 with comment closing August 9. FWP received 54 written comments, two verbal comments (phone calls) and one opposing petition with 30 signatures (a supporting petition was received after the comment period). The project received comments of support and opposition in almost equal numbers. The opposition generally came from nearby property owners and residents who were concerned about noise, safety, crowding, decreasing property values and environmental impacts in the immediate area. The comments in support of the project identified the need for additional public access and the decreasing availability of property on Flathead Lake.

Alternatives & Analysis: The EA evaluated the potential impacts of the following alternatives:

1. **Alternative A: No Action:** If no action is taken, FWP would not purchase or develop the property for public access.
2. **Alternative B: Proposed Action:** FWP would acquire 14.89 acres of property along Flathead Lake for inclusion in the statewide FAS system. The property would be developed with an access road, parking area, boat launch, dock, vault latrine, signage, boundary fencing and host campsite. Acquisition and development of the property by FWP would ensure future public access and prevent residential or commercial development of the property. On September 9th the department issued a Decision Notice addressing the public comments and identifying Alternative B as the Preferred Alternative.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale:

FWP recommends the commission authorize the department to acquire through purchase 14.89 acres adjacent to Flathead Lake near Dayton to be developed and managed as a FAS. This would improve public access to Flathead Lake for angling and other water-based recreation. Acquisition and development of the property by FWP would ensure future public access

Proposed Motion:

I move the commission approve the purchase of 14.89 acres of property along Flathead Lake to be developed and managed as a Fishing Access Site.